



# The Sphinx

*A Newsletter for the American Community in Egypt*

Consular Section, United States Embassy Cairo

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متوفر أيضا باللغة العربية

## American Citizen Services (ACS)

8 Kamal El Din Salah Street  
Garden City, Cairo

**(20-2) 2797-3300** (24 hour number  
for emergencies\* only)

\*ACS emergencies include: arrests, hospitalizations, child custody cases, welfare and whereabouts requests, repatriations, deaths, and lost and/or stolen passports.

For all other services, including passport renewals, consular reports of birth abroad, and notarial requests, please make an appointment using our website. For questions, send an email to:

[ConsularCairoACS@State.gov](mailto:ConsularCairoACS@State.gov)

U.S. Embassy Cairo is not a Federal benefits post. For all questions about federal benefits please contact U.S. Consulate Jerusalem directly at: [FBU.Jerusalem@SSA.gov](mailto:FBU.Jerusalem@SSA.gov)



## Annual Warden Meeting 2016

The Consular Section hosted our annual wardens meeting on April 7. This event helps us to maintain strong relationships with our existing wardens and to get to know our new wardens. We also shared ideas and information about the best way to assist U.S. citizens living in Egypt.

Consular Wardens are a critical piece of the Embassy's crisis response plan, serving both as amplifiers of Embassy messaging and as on-scene support during an emergency. Our wardens are all volunteers and are present in regions all over Egypt, representing various American expatriate sectors and U.S. citizen communities.

This year's meeting focused on the interplay between the Embassy and the wardens in the event of a crisis. This included an overview of the security situation in Egypt by the Embassy's Regional Security Officer and a miniature crisis management exercise. Led by the Consul General, this exercise allowed the Embassy to explain its crisis response activities as a framework, with the wardens discussing how they would support and facilitate these actions within their areas.

In the end, both sides had a better understanding of how to improve the response through cooperative action.



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## Egyptian Emergency Services Numbers

122 Police and Fire Department

123 Ambulance

140 National Phone Directory

16000 Child Emergency Line

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# ACS Services

*In an effort to provide the most efficient service, the American Citizen Services unit has an appointment system for all services. To make an appointment, please visit us on-line at [egypt.usembassy.gov](http://egypt.usembassy.gov).*

## Sign up for new SMS Service

In our last issue, ACS announced the launch of a rapid SMS notification system for Americans in Egypt; we are pleased to say that we successfully tested the SMS system in March. Going forward, ACS will use the SMS service in addition to our preexisting e-mail messaging to notify subscribers of urgent security-related information. If you are interested in receiving these SMS messages, please send an e-mail with your phone number to [cairoconssms@gmail.com](mailto:cairoconssms@gmail.com).



## Timing For Passport Applications

The processing time for a passport application submitted overseas is approximately six weeks; this includes adult passport renewals. There is no expedited processing for applications submitted at embassies overseas; be sure to allow enough time.

Don't forget to check the validity of your U.S. passport often as some countries require a minimum of six months validity to issue an entry visa.

Want to see something in particular in the next issue of *The Sphinx*? Email us:

[ConsularCairoACS@State.Gov](mailto:ConsularCairoACS@State.Gov)

## U.S. Embassy Cairo's Role in Federal Benefits

The U.S. Embassy in Cairo does not have a Federal Benefits Unit. However, the ACS unit can provide limited federal benefits / Social Security services. You should also be able to receive services by accessing the appropriate federal agency's website.

The ACS unit's role is to be an intermediary between the individual living abroad and the Federal agencies that provide benefits, though this role is limited.

Answers to Common questions about Social Security.

- You can apply for an initial Social Security number or request to replace your card at the ACS unit.
- The Social Security Administration (SSA) will periodically send out a form to all beneficiaries living outside the United States to determine if the beneficiary is still eligible to receive benefits. This form – the SSA-7162 and SSA 7161 for minors – is normally sent by SSA in June and October of each year. A delayed response may lead to a suspension of benefits.
- It's important to report any change of address to the SSA to ensure you get important notices.
- If you are receiving benefits and you reside in Egypt, you can update your contact information through the ACS unit (form SSA-21). If you don't update your contact information you could have your benefits suspended

## ACS will be closed on the following dates for local and U.S. federal holidays:

Sun-Monday, May 1-2

Sunday, May 29

Monday, July 4

Important dates in the 2016 federal and state election cycles are fast approaching! As an American living overseas, you are eligible to vote. To begin the process of voting from overseas, you must first register by logging on to [FVAP.gov](http://FVAP.gov). Registering early will help ensure your vote is counted! Read below for some answers to frequently asked questions on registering to vote from overseas.

## need to know absentee voting information

### **Q: How do I vote if I'm overseas?**

**A:** To vote in the 2016 State and Federal elections, you must register using a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) and request an absentee ballot from your home state. Visit [FVAP.gov](http://FVAP.gov) to do both. Only applications submitted after January 1, 2016 will be valid for the 2016 elections.

### **Q: I'm a U.S. citizen but I haven't lived in the U.S. for a long time. Can I vote in 2016?**

**A:** You can vote in the state where you last lived or were last registered to vote prior to leaving the United States. You may even be eligible to register if you no longer own property in that state or have unclear intent to return to the state.

If you are a citizen, who has never lived in the U.S. you may also be eligible to vote. Thirty states plus Washington, D.C. allow U.S. citizens with no prior residence to use their parents' last address as theirs. Check state regulations regarding [permanent residence](#).

### **Q: When is the registration deadline?**

**A:** Voting registration deadlines vary by state. Don't wait, do it now! Check your [state's deadline](#). For the earliest ballot delivery, request e-delivery to your e-mail address. Voters who submit FPCA late or request ballots by mail risk late ballot delivery.

### **Q: I am not 18 yet but will be by Election Day 2016. Can I vote?**

**A:** Yes! You can submit your Federal Post Card Application now and complete the process as normal.

### **Q: Can I vote for all offices?**

**A:** It depends on your state's law. If you temporarily live abroad, you can vote in all elections. If you live abroad permanently, you may only be eligible to vote in federal elections. Contact local election officials for your [state's procedures](#).

### **Q: Can I register or vote in-person at the embassy or consulate?**

**A:** No - U.S. elections are run at the State level and citizens must communicate directly with their election official to register, request a ballot and vote. Be sure to account for submission and mail delivery time to ensure your forms are received by the State deadline.

### **Q: Does voter registration affect my tax status?**

**A:** Voting in an election for federal offices may not be used as the sole basis of determining residency for the purpose of imposing State and local taxes. When claiming a new legal residence or domicile, legal counsel should be consulted because there may be other factors to consider, such as tax implications.







## Community Resources

### Interested in joining the U.S. Foreign Service?

The first step in the process, the Foreign Service Officer Test will be held at the U.S. Embassy Cairo on June 7.

To learn more and register for the test, visit <http://careers.state.gov>. For questions, please e-mail [FSOTQuestions@state.gov](mailto:FSOTQuestions@state.gov).

### Maintain Your Egyptian Visa Status

The Embassy encourages U.S. citizens to remain in compliance with Egyptian immigration law at all times; your visa status should correspond to your actual purpose of stay.

Basic information about Egyptian visa requirements is available from the Egypt page on [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov); more details may be obtained from the Egyptian [Passport, Emigration, and Nationality Administration](#), or by consulting with the Immigration Department located in each governorate.

## Happy Spring!



## Need-to-Know Overseas Tax Information

Here are some key points from the IRS' 2016 tax filing guide for U.S. taxpayers overseas. To read the full guide, go to the IRS website and visit the [international taxpayers](#) portion or go to the [Federal Benefits and Obligations](#) page on [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov).

### 1. Who Must File?

If you are a U.S. citizen or resident alien living or traveling outside the United States, you generally are required to file income tax returns, estate tax returns, and gift tax returns, and pay estimated tax in the same way as those residing in the United States. Your worldwide income is subject to U.S. income tax, regardless of where you reside.

### 2. **Did You Know?** U.S. Taxpayers living overseas may receive an automatic extension to file until June 18, 2016.

No form is required; write "Taxpayer Resident Abroad" at the top of your tax return.

**Caution:** This extension applies only for filing your tax return, not for payment. If you owe any taxes, you're required to pay by April 18, 2016. Interest and penalties generally will be applied if payment is made after this date.

### 3. You can mail your tax return and payment using the postal service.

If you mail a return from outside the United States, the date of filing is the postmark date. However, if you send a payment, separately or with your return, your payment is not considered received until the date of actual receipt. You may use approved private delivery services.

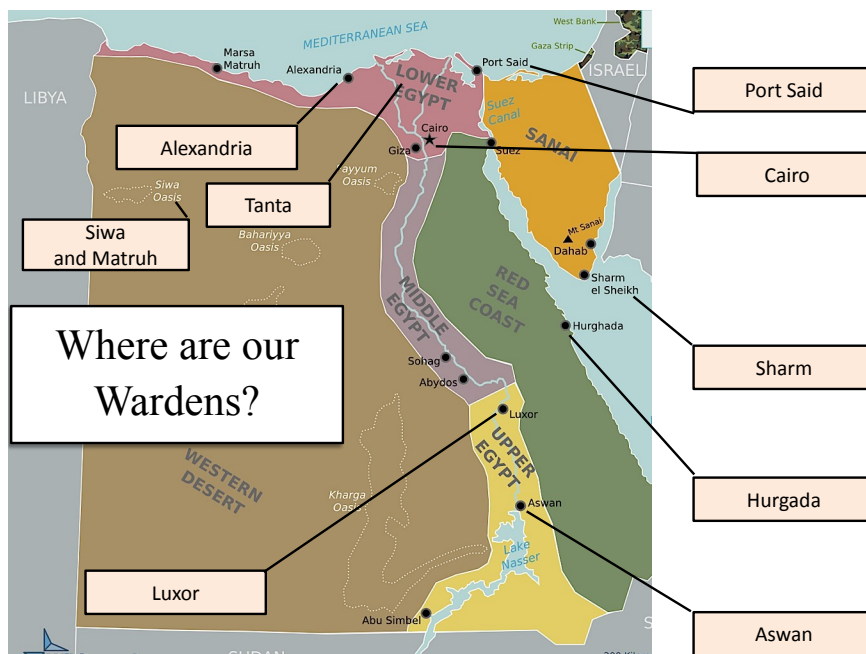
### 4. You can prepare and e-file your income tax return, in many cases for free. [E-File options](#) are listed on IRS.gov.

### 5. You must pay your taxes in U.S. dollars.

You can do so by direct pay by debit or credit card, foreign wire transfers, or foreign electronic payments.

### Keep in mind:

- The IRS will not initiate contact with taxpayers by email to request personal or financial information.
- You should only provide personal information to the IRS when you are the one who initiates the call.
- The IRS will not send you an email about a bill or refund out of the blue. Don't click on anything claiming to be from the IRS that takes you by surprise.
- Official IRS websites have URL addresses beginning with [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov), so if an IRS site you are looking at has a different address, don't enter any information.
- If you receive an unsolicited email that appears to be from the IRS, report it by sending it to [phishing@irs.gov](mailto:phishing@irs.gov).



### ...Annual Warden Meeting 2016 continued

The U.S. Embassy is always looking to broaden the warden system through the recruitment of new wardens. Currently, there are nearly 40 wardens across Egypt providing coverage over every populated region in Egypt.

ACS is especially interested in recruiting wardens in the Luxor area; the ability to communicate in both Arabic and English is preferred.

If you are interested in volunteering to become a warden, please contact us today at [ConsularCairoACS@state.gov](mailto:ConsularCairoACS@state.gov) for more information.

A strong warden system makes the American community safer!

## Spotlight on The Kentucky Derby, First Saturday of May

Often referred to as “the most exciting two minutes in sports,” the Kentucky Derby is a thoroughbred horse race taking place annually on the famous Churchill Downs racetrack in Louisville, Kentucky. The event started in 1875 and is the oldest running sports event in U.S. history. It has taken place every year since then, even during economic depression and world wars. As a result, the event holds an important place in the hearts of Kentuckians. Every year, residents put on a big festival prior to the race to celebrate Southern culture, community, and the importance of horseracing for the state’s economy. The festival includes traditional events such as a parade, hot air balloons, and fireworks display.

On the day of the race, celebrities from around the world attend to watch the world’s best horses compete for the title of Kentucky Derby Winner. Last year, an Egyptian-American horse, *American Pharoah*, won. The horse’s mother, *Pioneer of the Nile*, was a previous winner in 2008.

## Churchill Downs, Kentucky



*Photo Captions.* Photo on top right: Historical postcard from 1930 of the Churchill Downs racetrack showing horses coming around the bend during a race. Also notice the building’s “twin peaks” above the stands. To this day, little has changed. Photo on bottom right: A horse competing in the Kentucky Derby. Every year, about 155,000 gather to watch the horserace.